

Lockington, Elliott (SPAC/PSPC)

From: Media <media@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca>
Sent: April 23, 2020 12:59 PM
To: Harris, Emily (SPAC/PSPC); Roy, Cecely (SPAC/PSPC)
Cc: Media; Jean-François Létourneau; Me'Shel Gulliver Bélanger; Marie-Claude Hurens; Elizabeth Lindsay; James Stott; Vivianne Soubhie; Sara Lacasse; Martine Skelton; Rachel Lagacé
Subject: For MO approval: Media response / Tier 1 - COVID-19: Costs related to the pandemic / Ottawa Citizen

Emily, Cecely,

For your approval please. [New info](#).

PSPC provided response to Q1, Q3, Q5; TBS provided response to Q4, Q6, Q7; SSC provided response to Q2.

Merci

Michèle

Media response

Freelance

Rubin, Ken (Freelancer)

Date call received: April-09-20 at 13:30

Deadline: April-16-20 at 16:00

Tier 1 - COVID-19: Costs related to the pandemic

CONTEXT (for your information): The freelancer is writing about the effects of the pandemic and cost related.

The response will be a joint effort between PSPC (Q1, Q3, Q5 and Q7) TBS (Q4 and Q6) and SSC (Q2).

TBS has already provided their input, which can be found below.

QUESTIONS / RESPONSES:

Q1. With most federal employees working from home, what costs, county-wide and in the NCR, are there now and the next several months for maintaining vacated federal buildings?

Preferably costs can you supply such costs by buildings/regions? (PSPC lead)

Q3. Are all federal leases being honoured or reductions/delays in payment being sought for leased spaces? (PSPC lead)

Q5. Has cleaning federal buildings been put on hold? increased? (PSPC lead)

Q1. With most federal employees working from home, what costs, country-wide and in the NCR, are there now and the next several months for maintaining vacated federal buildings?

Preferably costs can you supply such costs by buildings/regions? (PSPC-PFMSL lead)

Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) is committed to providing our building occupants with productive and healthy work environments. Although occupancy levels are temporarily reduced, PSPC buildings remain operational. We continue to ensure the safety and cleanliness of our buildings through our regular operations and maintenance activities.

PSPC's real property portfolio encompasses both leased and crown-owned assets. While fixed costs will remain unchanged (i.e. lease payments, service contracts), there may be a reduction in variable costs, such as utility costs, due to the reduced level of occupancy, within our crown-owned portfolio. This information will not be available until the April month end utilities report is received and validated.

Q3. Are all federal leases being honoured or reductions/delays in payment being sought for leased spaces? (PSPC-RES lead)

PSPC is looking at ways to use its real property portfolio to help local communities and business tenants who are renting space in federally-owned buildings across Canada. Upon request by commercial tenants, PSPC will consider on a case-by-case basis deferring lease rents for a three-month period effective April 1, 2020. This support will help business tenants alleviate cost pressures as they deal with the effects of COVID-19. When PSPC leases space from private landlords, lease contracts will be honored and rent will be paid.

Q5. Has cleaning federal buildings been put on hold? increased? (PSPC-PFMSL lead)

PSPC is committed to providing its clients with healthy and productive work environments. We continue to liaise with Health Canada to determine appropriate cleaning protocols for our buildings during the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time, standard cleaning processes, twice daily, remain in effect with specialized cleaning/disinfectant protocols being implemented in the event of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. Should additional cleaning/disinfectant protocols be recommended, PSPC is ready to implement them.

Hand sanitizers are being installed at building entrances where supply exists.

In addition to the above standard cleaning specifications, when requested, PSPC has supported clients with additional specialized cleaning on a fee for service basis, supporting the delivery of essential government functions in a safe environment. For example, additional service protocols for public-facing services, 24/7 government operations, and high traffic areas. Cost figures for these services can be obtained through various departments and agencies.

For reports of suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in PSPC buildings, cleaning resources are mobilized quickly and specialized disinfection protocols are in place.

Q2. Are cost breaks in utility, communication network costs being sought? (SSC lead)

The federal public service is still busy at work, as is the network that supports it. The network enables program and service delivery by public servants regardless of whether their work is taking place at the office or remotely.

Q4. Has security costs increased? Commissioners been laid off? (TBS lead)

Q6. Have personnel been allowed to take computers/cell phones etc home? or pick up such equipment? (TBS lead)

A4-6. Federal public servants are delivering services for Canadians under unprecedented circumstances, including supporting the considerable and comprehensive federal response to the pandemic. TBS has been working, in collaboration with Public Safety, to ensure that the deputy heads in departments and agencies have the policy guidance they need and that they have identified critical services as part of their Business Continuity Plans (BCPs).

There are different thresholds for triggering a business continuity plan based on each department's operational requirements. Deputy heads are best placed to decide when to activate their plans based on an assessment of the potential impacts of the disruption to program and service delivery. Departments/agencies are responsible for their organization's Business Continuity Management (BCM) practices and their individual business continuity plans (BCPs).

Departments and agencies have plans in place to address a variety of disruptions. The [Policy on Government Security](#) includes requirements for organizations to develop and maintain business continuity plans, and organizations are encouraged to ensure that these plans are up to date for any possible disruption.

For information on work equipment for employees, please see the [message from the Chief Human Resources Officer](#).

Q7. What measures will be taken before employees or others will be allowed to enter federal buildings after the all clear directives to return is issued? (TBS lead)

The Government of Canada continues to take exceptional measures to curb the COVID-19 pandemic and to protect the health and safety of its employees while following the guidance of local health authorities, as well as municipal and provincial governments, many of which have declared states of emergency. The Government of Canada will continue to carefully follow public health guidance as restrictions are eventually lifted and as authorities advise that employees can safely return to the office.